

# PEG O' MY HEART'S VERSATILITY LED TO SUCCESS

**Notable Career of Laurette Taylor, One of the Most Popular Stars on American Stage—Hard Work in Stock Company Fitted Her for Stellar Role**

It was not long before the young actress was "discovered" by the Broadway critics, who hailed her a "genuine find," and her efforts that season in the underworld play won unstinted praise everywhere. The then young and enterprising firm of Cohan & Harris next obtained her services, and again Miss Taylor acquitted herself with credit. They were so impressed with her ability that they endeavored to find a play in which to feature her, but without success. It was then that she attracted the attention of the veteran producer Daniel Frohman, who at once placed her agreeably as the joint feature with Charles Cherry, in "The Seven Sisters," in which play she won new laurels.

After finishing her season with the Frohman production Miss Taylor hied herself to Los Angeles two years ago last summer, there to take a post-graduate course in acting at the Burbank Theatre, where Oliver Morosco maintains his internationally famous stock company, the only real and permanent organization of its kind in this country. Impresario Morosco, who was just then branching out as a producing manager of big calibre, was much impressed with the young woman's personality and work. At the very moment he was contemplating an invasion of the East with "The Bird of Paradise." He soon decided that to Miss Taylor should be entrusted the delicate yet daring and altogether unusual feature part of *Lana*, the half savage, half civilized little Hawaiian who knows only how to love and who gives herself as a human sacrifice that her white husband shall be free to become a great man, as his people desire. Her success in this role was tremendous and in New York alone the play ran for seven months and far into the summer season.

The startling versatility of the little actress, whose forte was girlish roles of any character, but whose talents were limited to no particular characterization, convinced Mr. Morosco that she was of sterling stellar stature. He thereupon placed her under a long term contract to star under his personal direction. J. Hartley Manners, an eminent dramatist with several successes, including "The House Next Door," &c., to his credit, was pressed into service and commissioned to construct a proper vehicle for the new star to be. Five weeks later he handed over the manuscript of "Peg o' My Heart," the principal character in which is a little Irish wildflower of a girl who is suddenly transplanted from poverty to luxury and who is the pivot about which revolves one of the most charming love stories ever given to the stage. With that thoroughness which marks his every endeavor Mr. Morosco decided to give the play a proper tryout right there in Los Angeles and under the most approved conditions. Scenery and other accessories were at once constructed and a company composed of his own splendid stock players was cast in support of the budding star. The success of both Miss Taylor as the heroine, *Peg*, and the Manners play exceeded all expectations and though originally scheduled for only a week's

performances the piece was continued for ten weeks.

The production was then carefully laid away until the regular theatrical season should open and the time arrive for Miss Taylor to make her real debut in the East.

That time arrived. New York witnessed the bombing of the new star over a year ago and hailed her with deserved acclaim.

## Yankee Thrift

It is still hard to beat Yankees in schemes to make other people's money do their work. Just before Christmas one of the banks of New Haven littered that town with circulars headed "You will need money for Christmas. Here is an easy way to get it. A sure way to have it. Join our Christmas Club. Starts December 29, 1913."

Weekly deposits were solicited to begin any time before January 10, 1914, with 2 cents, and continuing in arithmetical progression, that is, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 cents and so on until the highest sum, \$1, is reached two weeks before next Christmas. Then the bank is to give the depositor \$25.50.

There is a 5 cents a week class, with \$2.50 the highest deposit and \$63.75 the total for the two weeks before Christmas payment. There are similar schemes of and for varying amounts to

final payment of the smaller sum.

At first glance it looks like a semi-philanthropic movement to encourage saving. It may be.

Yankee thrift lies in the fact that the bank pays no interest on these deposits. The club member receives back exactly the amount he has saved. Meantime the bank has secured the use of cash sums which it can loan at current interest rates to add to its profits.

Such clubs have been running in Connecticut for two or three years and the profits to the banks have been sufficient



Peg o' My Heart and her dog Michael.

suit any pocketbook. One may, if preferred, begin an account with \$2.50 or \$1 as the initial deposit, decreasing the weekly payment by 5 or 2 cents until

to make the accounts worth having, for the membership in the clubs has run into the thousands. Fortunately, too, for the banks fostering these clubs

many members prefer to open accounts with the largest sum required, letting the weekly payments gradually decrease in size until the minimum is

reached. Advance payments when a member is flush are encouraged against possible lapses when he is hard pressed. Omission to pay the weekly amount ties

## Observations of Idiot Thieves and Low Comedy Homicides—Attempts to Get Into Asylums as Well as to Escape—Life of the Criminal Insane Comparable Nowadays to That of Patients in Sanitariums

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS WITH CRIMINAL INSANE

To the man in the street the mention of an asylum for the criminal insane suggests something little short of an earthly inferno. In giving the following sketch of twenty-five years spent in the society of all sorts and conditions of criminal lunatics I will endeavor to dispel this erroneous impression and present things in their true light.

In the year 1888 I took up the duties of an asylum attendant and until the present year I was employed continuously in that capacity. During these long years I have dealt with every phase of lunacy and crime, ranging from the thief idiot to the homicide low comedian. These are no misnomers, as there are numbers of patients entirely devoid in many respects who when a chance to steal something presents itself suddenly regain all their former predatory cunning, and there are fiendish murderers full of jocular and humorous antics.

Criminal lunatics may, roughly, be divided into three great classes. In the first group we have murderers, burglars, rogues, highwaymen and sexual offenders. In the second class are forgers, embezzlers, and thieves of high and low degree. The third group, which is the most numerous class, is mainly composed of chronic alcoholic cases convicted of simple misdemeanors.

From 15 to 20 per cent. of the inmates have been convicted of serious crimes, 25 to 30 per cent. are offenders against property, and the balance are petty offenders. The last class become insane while undergoing prison sentences for drunkenness in the majority of cases, and very many of them become incurably insane.

During my period of service I have been employed at Matteawan, Danvers and Bridgewater asylums for the criminal insane, and in that time I have witnessed a radical and sweeping change in the administration of these institutions and the treatment of the patients. In the old days the food was poor in quality and poorly cooked and served, the cells were infested with vermin, general hygiene non-existent, and cruelty was part of the daily routine.

I have seen the newly arrived patients bathed in dirty water of almost freezing temperature and shaved by incompetent men until their faces were scarred in a score of places. The least infraction of the rules was punished

by starvation, and any attempt to retaliate was met with barbarous punishment. Broken ribs and fractured jaws were matters of everyday occurrence, and in the event of an inquiry such injuries were attributed to a fall or an assault by another patient.

The "Irish hypo" was in general use. It consisted of getting behind a patient, taking a firm hold of his arms and while in that position hitting him repeatedly and with great force in the small of the back with the bended knee. A few administrations of this treatment generally resulted in partially crippling the victim for the time being. Another favorite way of punishing an unruly inmate was known as the "bridgewater bounce." The patient was taken hold of by two or three attendants, lifted shoulder high and suddenly dropped to the floor in a horizontal position.

These methods have long been abandoned, and milder treatment is now universally adopted. A few inhuman brutes were tried and convicted, and their punishment had a very good effect on the remainder. An attendant who is so hasty as even to push a patient roughly is immediately dismissed.

A number of the patients come from the courts unsentenced and are detained for observation, but the majority are men who have become deranged while undergoing prison sentences. It is only natural to infer that a certain proportion of these men feign insanity. It is well known in asylums that a number of the inmates are malingering, or shamming insanity.

Hard work and prison fare do not appeal to the average criminal, so after a while he begins to act and speak in a peculiar manner. He is examined by the alienists, and if he succeeds in deceiving them he is transferred to the asylum for criminal insane. Here arises one of the most difficult problems that the officials have to solve.

These men are legally insane. Yet while in the asylum they show very little evidence of mental inferiority. They eat, sleep, speak and act in a rational manner and spend their time playing cards and smoking when they are not engaged in planning an outbreak or an escape. They are a continual source of trouble to the officials until a few months before their prison term is up, when, wonderful to say, they become quiet and well behaved, and are finally released when their time is about up. Having spent the greater part of their sentence, comparatively speaking, in clover.

The asylum attendant has to take a

lot of risks in the course of his work. I was in Matteawan when Lizzie Halladay killed her nurse. This woman was of course incurably insane. She was apparently warmly attached to this particular nurse, but hearing that her friend was about to resign from the hospital she enticed her into a room, knocked her down and taking her keys locked the door. Then, taking the nurse's bandage scissors from her pocket, she stabbed her to death, inflicting twenty-seven wounds.

In another institution in which I was employed one of the engineers made a particular friend of one of the patients who was employed in the boiler house. This patient had a bad record, but having been on his good behavior for a long time was regarded as a "trustee," and had a number of privileges. The engineer was very kind to him and kept him supplied with newspapers, tobacco and many other little luxuries.

One evening the engineer did not come to dinner, but this caused no comment, as it had often occurred before. However, when the night engineer came to relieve him he was still missing.

His cap and jacket were hanging by his desk, which had been forced open. In the meantime this particular patient had gone to bed. He was aroused and questioned, and in reply said: "You will find him in the furnace."

When search was made the body was found under the banked coal in the furnace, burned to a cinder. "He did not give me any tobacco this week, so I killed him, and took it out of his desk," was the only explanation the culprit would give.

This patient was still an inmate of the same asylum up to last year. Whenever he was taxed with his crime he merely smiled and said: "You can't punish me for it. I am insane."

Strange to say, the greater the criminal the better behaved he is in the asylum. I have consorted with all sorts and conditions of patients and I have found as a rule that the murderers and lifers were far better conducted than the petty larceny artists and sneak thieves. With few exceptions the lifers and long term men are no trouble to the officers and many are devout church members.

One of the principal reasons why so many prisoners feign insanity is the different food they receive in the asylum. In prison they get no butter and only a limited quantity of meat and bread, besides having to work hard. In the asylum they get good meat and soup with potatoes and bread in unlimited quantity every day. The food is well cooked and neatly served, and in addition they receive oatmeal, clam chowder, mush, cookies, doughnuts, ginger bread and other delicacies every day. In season they get corn, melons, cucumbers, lettuce, celery and fruit of all kinds. Coffee, tea and butter are supplied with every meal.

In addition no man is compelled to work, and tobacco for smoking and chewing, with pipes, is served out every week, the attendants being supplied with matches for the exclusive use of the smokers. About ten times during the year, on every holiday, a feast is served, roast turkey, pork, chicken, fruit, candy and pies of all kinds forming the menu. Every week church services are held. In summer baseball matches and games of handball are par-

ticipated in by the patients, and in winter illustrated entertainments, moving pictures and concerts are given every week.

At least five hours each day are spent in the spacious exercise grounds in the open air, and every week each man has a change of underclothes after a good warm bath. Medicated and electric baths are given as required. Many rich people get less value for their money in the high priced sanitariums than do these compulsory wards of the State.

The lack of liberty affects many of these men so strongly that they are perpetually planning to escape. Many and varied are the devices to which they resort to accomplish their object.

One man saved a quantity of lead foil from tobacco wrappers and one evening last summer seven of the patients got clear away through his aid, but were captured later. The man with lead foil managed in some mysterious manner to melt the metal and mould a key, which enabled the fugitives to open three doors and get into an unused yard. The rest was easy. All the attendants were watching a ball game in the main yard, so the runaways took a number of benches from the smok room and lashing them together with pieces of shirting they scaled a twenty foot wall and were at liberty. Five of them were lifers and all were hunted down in a brief space.

Another man saved a lot of pepper until one night he shammed illness and when the night watchman, who was alone, entered his cell to attend him the pseudo sick man blew the pepper into the keeper's eyes, snatched his keys and, locking him in, escaped. He only reached the guard room gate, however. Nobody can pass this door, as it opens from the outside only, and when the gatekeeper looked through his window he saw what was up. Needless to say this patient did not get away.

Saws and files are frequently sent to the patients in pies and cakes, but are always discovered. Some time ago, however, a calamity was averted by a mere chance.

An Italian under a life sentence for murder received a present of a box of fruit from his friends. While examining the contents the officer jokingly said that he would keep a particularly fine bunch of bananas. To his surprise the Italian grew excited and told him to keep everything, but to give him the bananas. As the box contained some very choice fruit the keeper grew suspicious, and calling the head doctor the bananas were carefully examined

and found to contain five sticks of dynamite with fulminating caps. This was explosive enough to blow up the greater part of the asylum and if used would have caused a great loss of life, to say nothing of letting loose a horde of desperate and irresponsible men.

While on the subject of attempts to escape I may mention that I was in Matteawan during part of Thaw's incarceration and had a good opportunity to observe him. If he wished to escape he had scores of chances to do so long before he made his successful attempt. Evidently he got tired of seeking his freedom by the legal route and resolved to get away by fair means or foul. I had many a conversation with him and always found him affable and polite.

Like rich young men of his class he always had his own way, and was brought up to believe that money could do everything, and while in the asylum this feeling brought him into conflict with the administration on many occasions. He was inclined to be a little dictatorial and meddling, but showed no signs of insanity. He was liked by the patients and was of a very generous disposition.

As I have shown, the condition and treatment of the criminal insane leaves little room for improvement, but one thing strikes me as being in need of urgent reform. Under the existing law a man imprisoned for simple drunkenness or some slight misdemeanor is declared insane and committed to a criminal institution. If he has no friends, the chances are that he may live and die in the asylum. There are not enough doctors to examine each man carefully and at stated intervals, and if nobody looks out for him it is on the cards that he may never get out.

In Bridgewater at the present day there are a good many of such cases. Dipsomanias have been confined there for a number of years. Some have been there ten years. A number of these men would be able to earn their living with farmers, or in other employment, if the law allowed those in authority to release them in the custody of somebody who would be responsible for them.

There should be some kind of institution other than a criminal asylum, such as an industrial home and farm, for such cases.

In conclusion, I would suggest the organization of a social service bureau to inquire into the condition of these patients and to aid their efforts to regain their former status.

For the first time since the extraordinary flight from Allahah, Kathryn recollected the "elephant talk" which Ahmed had taught her. She rose wearily and walked toward Rajah which coked his ears at the sound of her approach. She talked to him for a space in monotone. She held out her hands; the dry, raspy trunk curled out toward them. Rajah was evidently willing to meet her half way. She ordered him to kneel. Without even pausing to think it over Rajah bent his calloused knees, and gratefully Kathryn crawled back into the howdah. Food and water; these appeared at hand as if by magic. So she ate and drank. If she could hold Rajah to a walk the howdah would last at least till she came to some village.

Later, in the moonshine, she espied the ruined portico of a temple.

(Continued Next Sunday.)

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